

# JEREMY IVES'S SOBER REQUEST

Proved in the MATTER of it, to be  
False, Impertinent and Impudent.



Very late last Night came Jeremy Ives's Sober Request, or Audacious Challenge rather, to my hands; so soon as I had read it, I could not but cry out, *Parturient Montes, nascitur ridiculus Mus*: What! but a sorry Mouse, the Product of Jeremy's great Mountain, after so many days Travail? I thought I might very well give my Nature her due Rest, and be early enough for him in the Morning: Not but that I will easily acknowledge, it made a great Noise, as all Empty Things use to do: This Morning come, I perused his Paper, and return this Hour's Answer to it.

The TITLE justly offends me, not a SOBER REQUEST, but because its NO SOBER REQUEST, yet call'd one. One would have thought Intreaties and meek Desires, expressed in civil and soft Terms, had been most answerable to such a Title: But as with Jeremy's Talk for Christianity, so in his Sober Request, it happens, that his Matter gives the Lye to his Title, and his Sober Request proves a gross EQUIVOCATION, yea, Contradiction to it self; since an *Hectoring*, *Vain-glorious Challenge* is the chief Matter of the Paper. No Wonder he reflected Equivocation upon my Christian-Confession the last Meeting, since it is so frequent for men to suspect others of that they are faulty in themselves; or as the old Proverb hath it, *He measured my Corn with his Bushel*: Men whose Eyes are dis-coloured by some Distemper, fancy every Object they behold to be of the same Complexion; Such Measures J. Ives hath taken of us; What Reason therefore have we to believe Jeremy in his Pretences to Christianity, much less admit of his Endeavours to prove us no Christians, who is so Un-Christian and Extravagant in his Request? I may boldly say, His Paper is False, Impertinent and Impudent, if that be False, which is not True; that Impertinent, which is nothing to the present Purpose; and that Impudent, which with a tenacious Importunity presseth that Impertinency: And this I shall briefly evidence that Paper to be guilty of; only I desire leave of my Reader to introduce it with a brief Narrative of the whole Matter, unto which Jeremy's Sober Request relates.

That we, the People called Quakers, have been lately Mis-represented, and that to greatest Disadvantage, both with respect to our Faith and Practice in Three Fictitious Dialogues published by T. Hicks, has been our Complaint for some Months. We address ourselves to the People called Anabaptists for Justice against him, being one of their Profession: In order to do us Right, as some of their Chiefsains gave it out, they appointed a Meeting at Barbican the 28th of the 6th Moneth; in which, to say no more, they aggravated his Guilt, by concealing it, and rendered themselves accessory to his Injustice, by pronouncing him clear, and that in our Absence.

The Persons chiefly concerned in the Prosecution of T. H. being returned of great Journeys, farther betook themselves to the Baptists for Satisfaction for the great and unparalleled Wrongs done them and their Friends: After great Importunities used, and much Time spent, seeing them in good Earnest, and that a Meeting was unavoidable, they condescended; the Meeting was the 9th of this Instant at Barbican, the Account of which is publick.

This Opportunity, with such difficulty obtained, through the most unfair Carriage of our Adversaries, being lost, before we came to that part of our Charge we not only resolved to begin with, but mostly to insist upon, we press, and they promised that next time they would hear us in that Matter.

Another Meeting was appointed on the 15th Instant, at our Meeting-Place near Wheeler-Street, where T. H. that great Dialoguer, thought it not fit to appear in Defence of his Work, or to use his own Phrase, or near it, to venture his Person in so great a Multitude; a Narrative of this is also in Print, only thus much I would with all Brevity observe:

1. That J. Ives pretended to be delegated by T. H. &c. and he and they deny it, as we can make appear.  
2. That J. I. T. P. and R. T. &c. did most obstinately wish and our Prosecution of T. H. as a Forger, or as having writ fictitiously, both in the Name of Christian and Quaker, which was the Foundation of all our Appeals for Justice, and of the Appointment of these publick Meetings.

Thus they did, though against their express Promise made us at Barbican, to resume the Matter of Forgery against T. H. next time, that then by impertinent and unfair Interrogatories, they diverted us from.

3. J. Ives after our Condescension to let him go on in what he did undertake, viz. to prove us no Christians, used not T. H's Arguments, much less endeavoured to defend them, the Business in Hand upon that Point; therefore T. H. is as unjustified, even in that, as before.

4. That notwithstanding he did with so much manifest Insult and Levity often bawl out, *Will you hear your selves prove no Christians? I will prove you no Christians, &c.* he fell to this miserable Shift, *Give me an Evidence of your Christianity*; just as if I should call a Man Knave, and failing in my Proof, I should put him upon proving that he is an Honest Man: And because G. K. and others of us told him, it was not our present Task, in that it was improper for a Respondent to prove; he with this Popular Flout, *Is it not your Business to prove your selves Christians?* took leave of the Meeting, crying out, to our Entreaties to stay, *Not a Word more*; I cannot stay; and T. Plant, *We are spent*, &c. or to that Purpose; and so Jeremy flung himself, either over or under the Bar, like some dismist Pleader.

5. It is farther observable, that when we argued methodically, and it pinch him, he betook himself to some vulgar or popular Interrogatory to divert the Matter; and if at any Time we answered in a more Popular Way, for the sake of the Auditory, and it took them, he would with the Contempt and Magisterialness of some Doctor of the Sentences, fling such at us, *Is this your Disputant? Are you a Schollar, and know no better the Rules of Disputation?* Endeavouring, though unsuccessfully, to baffle the Auditory in both Respects: 1. By rendering the most proper Answers suspected of Weakness by Popular Reflection or Interrogatories, at first perhaps more obvious to the People. And 2. By bringing the most familiar Answers into Question, by untruly faulting us with Breaking the Rules of Disputation, concerning which the Vulgar could not be so proper Judges; yet Hoots were his Recompence from the People: But to say Truth, a Man of J. Ives's Latitude may sail by any Wind; and he that had any Conscience might without Difficulty see him practise as little as need to be: A Sober Heathen would have been justly scandal'd at his frequent Evasions and Levity. Thus much as to his Concern in the Meetings: Now for his Paper, which he styles, a Sober Request; but very untruly.

For first, He grounds it upon T. H's opposing the Christian to the Quaker, and calls this the first Article of our Charge, in which he grossly abuseth his Reader, that not being the first Article: What we excepted against, was, that T. H. called it *A Dialogue between a Christian and a Quaker*, wherein (saith he) is faithfully represented the most concerning Opinions of the Quakers, together with their Manner and Method of reasoning; whereas we did, and still do affirm, that it is no Dialogue (though many have thought so, and contended for it as a Real Dialogue) but invented and fashioned by himself.

Next, We say, that he has made us to speak those Things that not only we never said, but which are not sayable by any Real Quaker upon his own Principles; of this we have complained: Now if T. H. should have asked us, *Wherein have I so wronged or abused you?* which was the Question proper for him or his Abettors to have made, we should immediately have produced the Particulars for Confirmation of our Charge; and then it had been T. H's Part, either to have confessed no Quaker ever said so, or have instanced where any Quaker had so writ or spoken; but this equal Way, with all Artifice imaginable, was declined. I say again, It was not simply his Opposition of a Christian to a Quaker, but his doing of it most abusively: We know, that several Baptists, through an imperfect Knowledge of our Principles, repute them Unchristians; so that for us to have appealed to them for Justice against T. Hicks for merely opposing the Christian to the Quaker, had been to appeal to them against themselves, since so far they all agree; but in this they pretend

not to concur with T. H. viz. in abusively and fictitiously doing of it; wherefore we called on them for Justice against him, not for his meely, but fictitiously opposing the Christian to the Quaker, and about which they pretended to answer us; the other we will consider afterwards. Now J. Ives, T. Hicks, T. Plant, &c. would have the World believe, that our Charge is levelled chiefly, and in the first Place, at T. H's meer Opposition of the Christian to the Quaker, when in the Grammatical Sense of the Article, it must needs be understood of the Fictitious, &c. of the Dialogue; not only in his so calling it, yet making it, to the Abuse of the Vulgar; but in giving that under our Names, which is not sayable by us as Real Quakers: And for any to proceed to justify T. Hicks, before they have heard our Accusation, and what we can urge to illustrate the Truth of it (the acknowledged and allowed Right of every Plaintiff in English Courts) is very unequal: But for J. Ives to intrude, and then to take upon him to prove us no Christians, and confidently call this the first Article of our Charge, when it is not so, nor the Ground of those Meetings he so much disturbed by the like Impertinent and Cavilling Interruptions, is such a Piece of Arrogancy, as deserves the Readers severe Rebuke. Besides, T. H. says, he has proved it already in his Dialogues; what need of reassuming the Proof? Does he doubt therein? He says, No; therefore we have set our selves against them, charging them with Forgery, and desiring Justice of the Baptists against the Author of them: I ask then any sober Man if it be reasonable that T. Hicks, much less J. Ives, should undertake to make good his opposing the Christian to the Quaker by New Mediums or Arguments, before such Time as we have been fully heard in our Exceptions against the Old ones, and that our Objections against T. Hicks's pretended faithful Representation of our Faith and Practice, be fairly sol'd? Let them answer us in the one, and we will never shun them in the other: But, O wretched Shuffle that is used to put us beside that Black, yet true Charge, exhibited and closely prosecuted by us against T. Hicks and his Abettors.

2dly, J. Ives's (so term'd) Sober Request is impertinent, since it calls us from the present Pursuit we are upon, which is of so great Importance to our Profession and Persons: It looks as if he would engage us not to Right, but divert us from crying out, *We are wronged*; But we are not to be taken off from our general Charge, to answer a whiffing Piqueer: No such Matter; we better understand our Business, then to let fall that manifest Advantage we have upon our Enemies: T. Hicks we charge with Forgery, &c. and do not only say, he hath abused the Quaker, and that under the Title of a Christian, but are ready to prove it before any serious and free Auditory: If J. Ives will there give T. Hicks his Assistance, with all our Hearts. We do not believe our Cause a Jot the worse, or in any more Hazard for his opposing it: But that we should be at his Beck, to bestow a Dispute upon him, that shall no way end the present Difference, because not deputed by T. Hicks or his Company, to any such Work, I must tell him, will not quit Cost; for when all is done, it will be but Jeremy still; and I assure him, that goes but a very little way, even with several of his own Profession. We desire to dispute to better Purposes, where the Issue may have greater Tendency to Peace, by a more general concluding of Parties; for that we have laboured and endeavoured to work through all Opposition to accomplish it. Yet to show him that we baulk not an Examiner, provided it be to some purpose; let J. Ives but personate T. Hicks, and stand our Charge of Forgery, and W. Kiffin, D. Dyke, T. Plant, T. Hicks, &c. give it under their Hands (if they think fit to embark their Cause in that Bottom) that what J. Ives shall Answer, Propose, Affirm or Deny, shall be binding with them, and we will with all Alacrity fall to work: But if He will neither do the one, nor They the other, I hope all sober People will hold us justified in our refusing to answer so Insobber and Impertinent a Request.

Besides many look upon what J. I. says of us, no more, then if some Scandalous Person had flung out a Reflection against us as we should pass the Streets, a thing too common, and frivolous to deserve our Notice, much less our Answer. Alas! The Man is too well known to harm us by his Reflections: I think I may say, *His Tongue is no Slander*—at this time of day; he that hath Impudence to say we shuffled at any Meeting, and Falseness enough to Print us incapable of saying any thing pertinent in his Presence, and insulting over him in his Absence, may say and do any thing where Impudence and Falseness are the great Requisites; Our Narrative will in this Particular clear us. Though I must tell J. I. I was never but at three Disputes with him, and he evermore manifestly quitted the Field, I may say shamefully, I will not say shamefully; I would give every man his Due, though his Reasons for Retreating might have deserved as much from a Person of more Modesty; that is to say, *My Lungs are not made of Whitelather—My Hearing is not good—You are Younger and Stronger then I—I will Dispute no more at this time—Not a Word more*, and the like.

His saying, *I cryed (as if I had been among the Boyes in Maresfields) They run, They run*, shows him Angry that I took notice of it: I cannot remember I so express myself; I might say, *What! will you run? Do not run away from us*; & I know no ill in that: nothing is more certain, then that they us'd what Expedition they could to be gone, going as abruptly out as they came in. I gave Jeremy that Diabell, that I must needs say, suited his Actions; and if he will have Maresfield belong to it, it very well answers to a Stager, and such an one, be he Maresfield or Smithfield, J. Ives exactly imitated.

My Advice to Jeremy is, that he give better Evidence of his own Christianity, before he undertakes to Un-Christian us: It is to mock the World for a Man of his Circumstances, to undertake the Proof of any Man's being No Christian; but more especially to unconcern an intire People in Christianity, among whom are so many better Persons then himself; Indifferent People being Judges. If he is not a Jew, that is one outwardly, but he a Jew, who is one inwardly; what is He that is neither Jew inwardly, nor outwardly? I know some that think it no hard matter to prove Jeremy no honest Heathen; but no more of that now.

I will conclude with these five things in order to comply with his Request:

1. Let J. Ives make it appear to us that he is Deputed to this Work; for it is beneath us to engage against a single Person, as well as beside our Business, as the Case lieth, to think our selves concern'd in his Rodomontado's and vapouring Challenges: He is Privateer-like, but for himself, and stands upon no body's Leggs, but his own; and some think, not always well on them neither.

2. That he will Personate T. Hicks as to the Matter charg'd by us against him, to wit, of writing Forgeries, Perversions, and Slanders, and that with his Brethren's Consent.

3. That before he enters upon Proving us No Christians, he would tell us, *What a true Christian is*, or we go by no Standard.

4. Prove to us, that He is that Christian, or else he is unfit to prove another No Christian.

5. That we are not such Christians; but Hereticks and Impostors. And if he will undertake this, let me hear of him, and he shall never want Time and Place (so far as it is in my power to afford him either) where and when to show his utmost Skill and Strength, against the Quakers: If he will not, let the whole World conclude with me, That these great and mighty Boasters dread nothing more then a Publick Meeting, in which to stand the Force of that Charge exhibited against T. Hicks, by the so much mis-represented Quakers.

Oh! that they would learn Wisdom, and once believe that to do justly, love Mercy, and walk humbly with the Living God, through the Assistance of the heavenly Grace, which is the Life of the Christian Religion, were True Religion; and not thus furiously anathematize us for Hereticks and Impostors, because we can not fall in with them in every thing. Let them learn this Scripture, *I will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice*.

London, the 27th of the  
3th Month, 1674.

W. P.